GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:790
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2005
WELFARE OF STREET CHILDREN
Barman Shri Ranen;Gadakh Shri Tukaram Gangadhar

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the Policy of the Government to welfare, support, rehabilitate and educate street children;

(b) whether there is any record with the Government about the number of street children in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State/Union Territory-wise;

(d) whether the Government is aware that welfare of the street children/destitute children in the country is largely neglected and even the juvenile justice system is not being properly implemented;

(e) whether due to negligence some of these street children become victim of criminal gang and later they indulge into pretty crime;

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(g) whether the Government proposes to frame any new policy for the welfare of street children; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the same is likely to be completed?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT (SMT. SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN)

(a) The street children are children in need of care and protection as defined in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. The policy of the Government of India for such children is to provide them proper care, protection and treatment by catering to their development needs. This Ministry is implementing a scheme `An Integrated Programme for Street Children` with the aim of preventing destitution and facilitate withdrawal of these children from a life on the streets by providing them with shelter, safe drinking water, education, vocational training and recreation.

(b) & (c) No survey has been done to ascertain the number of street children in the country.

(d), (e) and (f) The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000, deals with the children in need of care and protection as well as those in conflict with law. These children including street children are to be provided facilities of shelter and care in homes to be set up for this purpose in order to ensure their proper development. This Ministry is implementing a scheme `A Programme for Juvenile Justice` under which State Governments/Union Territories are provided assistance to the extent of 50 percent of their funds requirement for setting up of homes as well as maintaining children in them as per the scheme norms. Many Non-Governmental Organizations are also running these homes and are being assisted under the scheme. A total of 40739 children were assisted during 2004-05 under the scheme. The Childline service which is a 24-hour toll free emergency phone service for children in distress is also being supported under the scheme `An Integrated Programme for Street Children`.

(g) & (h) No, Sir.